

The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation

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September 20, 1974

Joshua Lederberg, Ph.D.
Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Laboratories
Stanford University School of Medicine
Stanford Medical Center
300 Pasteur Drive
Palo Alto, California 94305

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

More and more the scientist and the clinician are being asked by society to make decisions which are based upon ethical considerations in addition to scientific ones. Likewise, students of medicine, particularly those concerned with problems involving the central nervous system, are demanding greater exposure to the principles underlying ethical decision-making. Politicians also are looking to the academic and scientific community for assistance in developing ethical guidelines concerning the care of patients and experimental subjects.

Although there has been an explosion of interest in the teaching of ethics in medical schools just as occurred with genetics a decade or two ago, there still exists an enormous gap between the clinician-scientist and the scholar-ethicist. The physician trained in the scientific method finds himself in unfamiliar territory unless he reasons in terms of non-moral consequences. Likewise, the ethicist sometimes finds it difficult to offer assistance in specific problem cases.

For these reasons the Kennedy Foundation has decided, in collaboration with The Joseph and Rose Kennedy Institute for the Study of Human Reproduction and Bioethics at Georgetown and the Kennedy Interfaculty Program in Medical Ethics at Harvard, to sponsor an intensive mini-semester, total-immersion course in ethics related to medicine. The dates for this course or seminar are January 2 to 12 inclusive. The course content will parallel that of the formal course given by Arthur Dyck at Harvard University and will be the equivalent of a full 22-hour, 3-credit college course. In addition, the lectures and readings will be supplemented by small discussion groups chaired by doctoral candidates at Harvard and Georgetown and other Kennedy Medical Ethics Scholars (post-graduates and professors) concerned with the ethical analysis of complex medical cases.

The daily format of the course will consist of two 1-hour lectures given by such ethicists as Arthur Dyck, Richard McCormick, Paul Ramsey, Leon Kass and others, followed by long reading periods for which selected reprints and articles will be provided. Question and answer periods and small discussion groups tackling clinical problems will complete the daily program.*

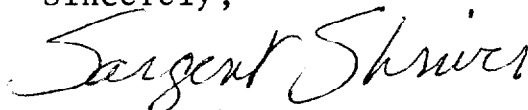
Living and dining arrangements have been planned at Georgetown to facilitate communication and interchange between young scholars in ethics and leaders in medicine.

The cost of the total program at Georgetown, including meals and lodging, will be borne by the Kennedy Foundation, but transportation costs to Washington will not be provided for other than the young scholars since the invitees are of sufficient stature to command travel funds.

Mrs. Shriver and I cordially invite you to participate. We hope this brief but intensive program will have an impact on some of the leaders of American medicine and assist all of us to deal more effectively with the difficult moral problems developing in medical practice and research. Although the period of time may seem inordinately long or short depending upon one's perspective, we are assured by the faculty organizers that an effective, worthwhile introduction to ethics can be provided.

Unfortunately all the invitees cannot be accommodated and we will have to assign the limited number of places (40) on a first reply basis. There is a card enclosed for your response. Please respond with your suggestions even if you cannot come. Details of ground transportation, room assignments, etc., will follow upon your reply.

Sincerely,


Sargent Shriver

RSS/kc
Enclosure

*Academic appointments of these men are as follows:

Arthur J. Dyck, Ph.D.
Mary B. Saltonstall Professor
of Population Ethics
Harvard Divinity School

Paul Ramsey, Ph.D.
Harrington Spear Paine
Professor of Religion
Princeton University

Richard A. McCormick, S.M., STD
Rose Kennedy Professor of
Christian Ethics
The Joseph and Rose Kennedy Inst.
Georgetown University

Leon Kass, M.D.
Joseph Kennedy Professor of Ethics
The Joseph and Rose Kennedy Inst.
Georgetown University